

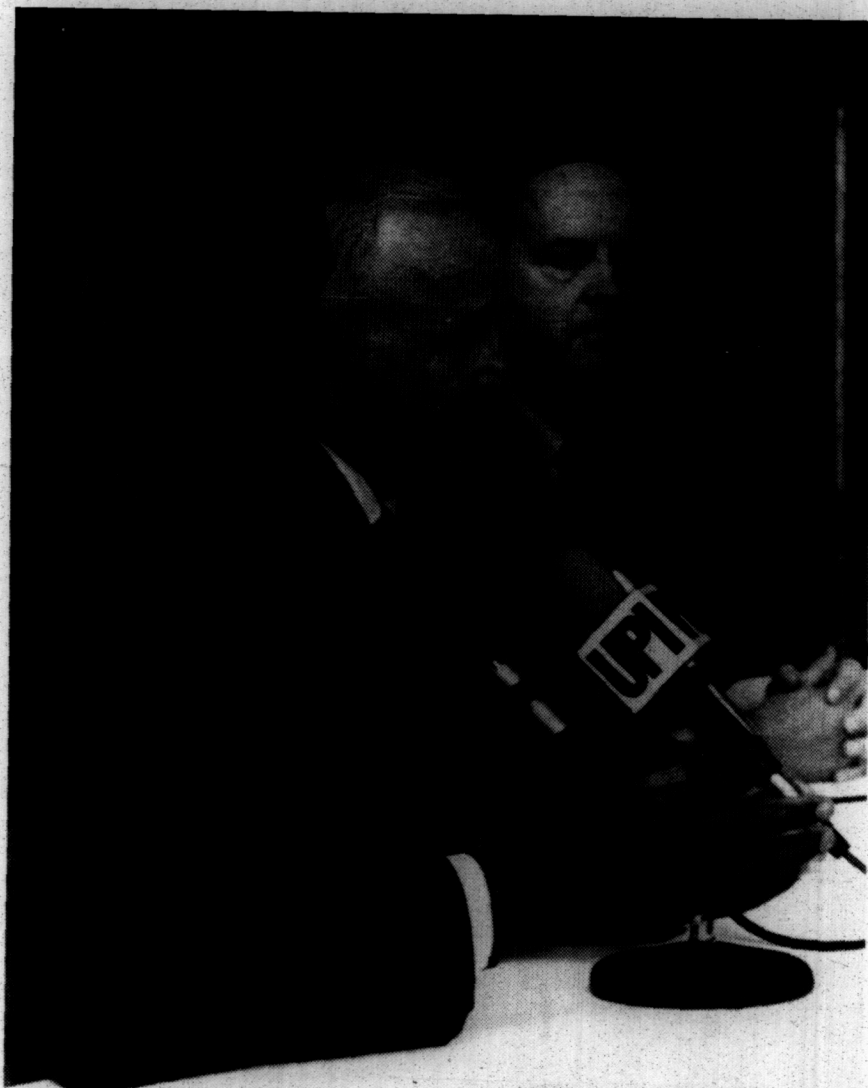
The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, April 25, 1996

Published Since 1877

Frost: Racial reconciliation is key to revival in America



KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — Revival will not come to America unless there is racial reconciliation in the body of Christ — and the obligation for reconciliation, said Gary Frost, pastor of Rising Star Church, Youngstown, Ohio, is equally shared by blacks and whites in the church.

Speaking April 9-10 for the Scudder School of the Prophets Lectureship at Midwestern Seminary, Frost expressed his "burden" for reconciliation and decried the "prophet deficit" in America's pulpits.

Drawing on the account of Elijah's battle with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, Frost noted although God reported there were 7,000 Israelites who were still faithful to Jehovah, only Elijah was willing to speak out against the worship of Baal.

"Where are the modern-day Elijahs who will accept the challenge of pagan culture and speak unapologetically, 'thus saith the Lord'?" asked Frost, who is serving a second one-year term as second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention. "I am convinced that too often preachers are playing to the applause of earth rather than to the praise of heaven.

"I want to challenge you to be prophetic on the issue of racism," Frost told the seminarians, while warning being prophetic may mean "you may not get the church you wanted."

Frost noted while it is expected that African Americans will preach against racism, "There are messages that have to be proclaimed to white folk,

that only white folk can preach.

"We have a way of making racism a secondary sin," Frost said, urging that it be put at the top of the list of moral ills, along with issues like homosexuality, pornography, and drug addiction.

African Americans, too, have challenges concerning prophetic preaching against racism, Frost said.

African Americans have an obligation to speak out concerning "the evil of Farrakhanism," the purpose of which is the glorification of Louis Farrakhan, Frost said. Farrakhan is the leader of an African American Muslim movement which sponsored the "Million Man March" in the nation's capital last year.

"It's not a social movement," Frost said. "This is a religious, spiritual movement. And it's evil and it's Satanic."

Frost expressed the belief there are two competing themes which are arising to deal with racism in America: reconciliation, as exhibited in the Promise

Keepers movement, and isolationism, as demonstrated by Farrakhan's movement.

"If we're going to make a difference, we have to be prophetic. We have to be willing to speak out against sin, regardless of what skin color it has," Frost said.

During his two-day visit to the Kansas City, Mo., campus, Frost taught in evangelism, theology, and ethics classes, in addition to speaking twice for the Scudder Lectures.

Frost also spoke to local African-American and Anglo Southern Baptist leaders, along with administrators of Midwestern Seminary, to discuss practical steps which may be taken to follow up the historic racial reconciliation resolution adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention at its 150th anniversary last year in Atlanta.

"I thank God for the integrity of the Southern Baptist Convention leadership in being willing to lead on this issue," Frost declared.

Frost to address SBC's African-American meeting

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Gary Frost, second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will be the guest speaker during the African American Fellowship's June 9 worship service preceding the June 11-13 SBC annual meeting in New Orleans.

The fellowship's Sunday worship will be at 5:15 p.m. at New Orleans' Franklin Avenue Church.

There are more than 1,600 African American congregations among the 40,000 churches in the SBC.

Abortion alternative

Sylvia Boothe knows there's more to an abortion than the surgical procedure that takes a life, and she knows how deep the anguish can run among those who are involved. "We have a lot of hurting people sitting in our churches," said the director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) nationwide crisis pregnancy center effort. In the pews are such people as the mothers and fathers of aborted infants, would-be grandparents, and friends who now regret they suggested an abortion in the first place. Many fear rejection if their role in an abortion is revealed, Boothe pointed out. "Part of our call as the church is to be approachable and to be instruments of God's healing..." she said. That's one of the reasons HMB's Alternatives to Abortion ministry has established 31 crisis pregnancy centers and plans to open an additional 10 centers each year — to "educate and equip Southern Baptists to be involved in long-term, positive ministry to those involved in crisis pregnancies," Boothe said. For more information on the ministry, contact Alternatives to Abortion toll-free at (800) 962-0851.

Foreign education

If it seems that more and more foreign students are pursuing educations in America, you're right. The Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) in Nashville estimates that 500,000 internationals are studying at U.S. colleges and universities, and a Baptist interagency task force has called for a "new movement" to reach them for Christ. "Southern Baptists need to be out there as the model for how to reach internationals. If we are going to reach the world for Christ, we have to reach international students," said Brad Gray, consultant for BSSB's national student ministry. To that end, the task force has released **Ministering to International Students**, a comprehensive 80-page guide that includes Bible study, outlines, and descriptions of ongoing programs, a list of resources, ministry models from local churches, and much more. "We need to jump start international ministry from where it is now. We have to give this priority," Gray said. **Ministering to International Students** can be obtained by writing to National Student Ministry, BSSB, 127 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37234.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

First Church, Canton, leads the Canton Ministerial Association in giving away 5,000 marked New Testaments to area residents. "This ran across racial and denominational lines," said First Church pastor Louis Smith.

20 years ago

William Carey College announces the purchase of the old Gulf Coast Military Academy property in Gulfport, a 20-acre beachfront plot that the Baptist-affiliated college in Hattiesburg plans to use as an academic and conference center.

50 years ago

The Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union announces "This Camp We Build," a campaign to raise \$50,000 for construction of Camp Garaywa near Clinton, on land recently acquired from nearby Mississippi College.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK —by Guy Henderson

The new millennium

We are still more than three years away from the year 2000, but already there is excitement surrounding the coming of that year. It will be the beginning of the third millennium since Christ's birth. We will have passed the century mark, and civilization will continue. Still, it is well to pause and see where we are, the direction we are going, and the best conveyance to get us there.

Racing Toward 2001 by Russell Chandler (Zondervan Publishing House) takes a look at the forces shaping America's religious future. Jerrold K. Footlick wrote an article on students entitled "Slouching Toward the Millennium" (*Newsweek*, Dec. 10, 1990); books, television documentaries, and articles are spewing forth in volcanic proportions. Much of them will be written in a general sense, but "all generalizations are wrong except this one."

Megatrends 2000 by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene (Avon Press) was a best seller for a season. In it, the authors mention 10 new directions that will lead us to the 2000 mark. The book has been called "multi-interesting, maxi-enlightening, and megagood." Supposedly it is the baby boomers' road map for the 1,000-year trip.

Naisbitt and Aburdene write of a new interest in the arts, a global lifestyle in a consumer-driven society, the decline of the welfare state, the age of biology, and the

onset of a religious revival.

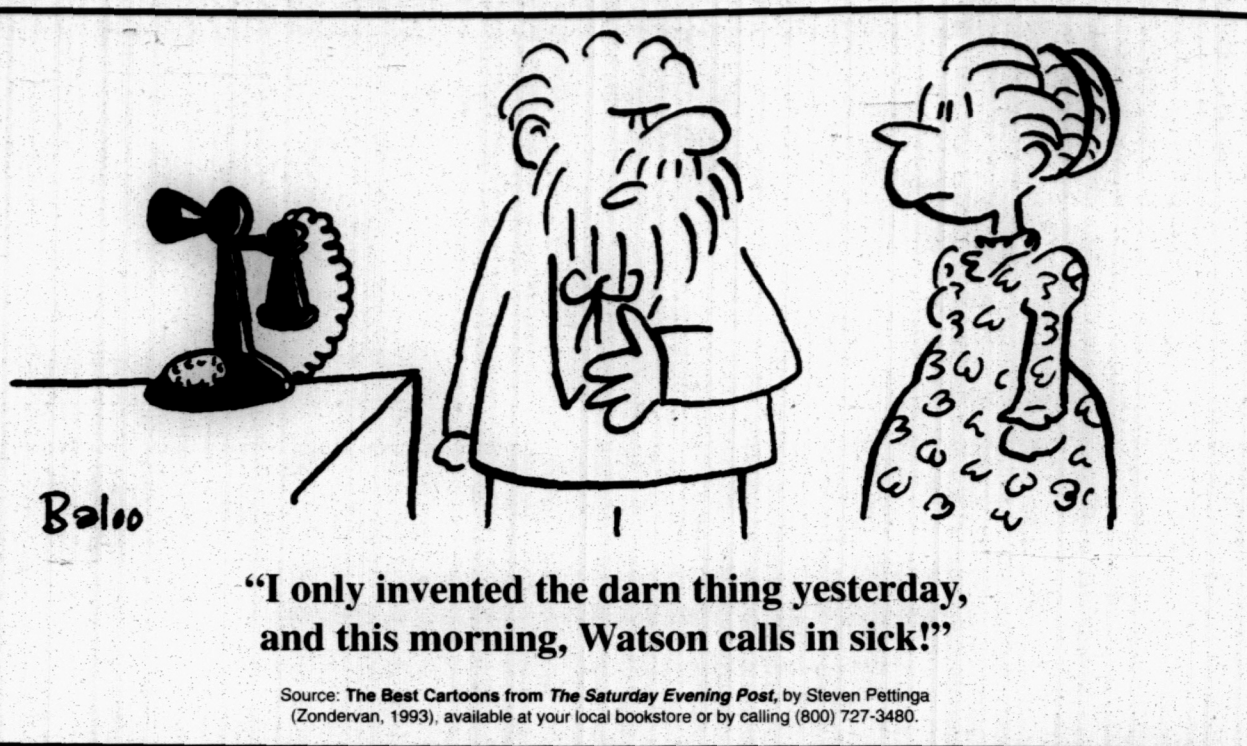
Chandler prophesies a "technological takeover," a new god called "Bioethics," clashing cosmologies, and the battle for world view. Innovative churches will surface; business-as-usual churches will slowly die out. The "Body-Life" church, with members looking to each other — not to a pastor — for support, fellowship, and ministry will be the wave of the future.

Cell groups, affinity groups, and target marketing will be the crest of the wave. Elmer Towns, church growth specialist, said, "The greatest revolution in the modern church will be in worship."

AIDS will hit nearly every American family in the next decade. Ralph Nader and other consumer experts say "kids are big business" and will become maxicons at an early age. Anti-Christian sentiment, fueled by excesses of some evangelical groups, will continue to plague the church. Deceptive mind control by cults will continue as a troubling factor.

Owen Cooper, the last layman to be president of the Southern Baptist Convention, wrote a book, **The Future is Before Us** (Broadman). In it, he said, "The church is the one institution eternally seeking to replace error with truth. God has entrusted his church to his followers."

There is one other fact for the new millennium: Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever.



Source: *The Best Cartoons from The Saturday Evening Post*, by Steven Pettinga (Zondervan, 1993), available at your local bookstore or by calling (800) 727-3480.

THE FRAGMENTS

If you lived in Confusion, you'd be home now

Mississippi does not take a backseat to any place when it comes to names of our churches and communities. So let's Splunge into It. We have more Antiochs and Bethels than some states have churches. But then you add Salem, Shiloh, Bethlehem, Ebenezer, Jerusalem, Jericho, Macedonia and you can go from A to Z — Amaziah to Zion Hill.

However, the names of "watering holes" may be used more than biblical names. Creeks, rivers, lakes, and springs appear to be the favorites. Sure we can start with Dry Creek and end with Double Springs and slake our thirst along

the way with Blythe Creek, Riverside, Harlands Creek, Blackwater, Rawls Springs, Gooden Lake, Goodwater, and Barefoot Springs.

Somewhere enroute from the old country our forefathers were enthralled with the word "pleasant" and almost every county will have a Pleasant — Ridge, Hill, Valley, Home, or Dale. Add Old, New, East, or West to any name and you can plot our economic history.

We are big on mountains, hills, and valleys. Drivers Flat and Flat Rock not withstanding, Mississippi has all the biblical mountains — Hebron, Moriah,

Olive, Comfort, Tabor, Zion, Gilead, plus Mt. Manna and Steep Hollow.

Admittedly, some folks just couldn't shake the old country homesickness and called their new hometowns Dublin, Hamburg, Paris, Savoy, Topeka, Brooklyn, New Ireland, Cairo, Sebastopol, and Rome.

However, we really came into our own with Indian words which are spelled about like our forefathers thought the Indians pronounced it: Tishomingo, Yockanookany, Chalybeate, Sabougla, Tuxachena, Escatawpa, Wahalak, Itta Bena, Louxahoma, Tangipahoa, O'Tuckalofa, and Pocahontas.

Let a Mississippian get halfway to anywhere and he'll name the place Midway. Explain it to the good folks in Okatola or Euclatubba who must be nearly grown before they can spell it. (Spellcheck just blew out on my computer.)

Birds were seen, so places named Blackhawk, Wren, Thrasher, and Eagle (Lake) sprang up. Roads were built and Plymouth, Ford's (Creek), Goodyear, Wheeler Grove, Oil City, and Derby rolled in. For a while we thought the gambling craze had crept in but believe me, Black Jack, Holly Bluff, and Horseshoe had nothing to do with it.

Then we have other names, Soso in nature, which defy explanation. Woolmarket, Learned, Military, Poolville, and Strayhorn are self-explanatory, but where do we classify Lulu, Arm, Cash, Red Lick, and Coaltown Fellows? We are just glad **The Baptist Record** goes to all these churches plus 1,500 others and 68 foreign countries. Thanks. — GH

Miss. association's landmark number of baptisms noted by Home Mission Board

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — The 4.1% increase in 1995 baptisms is no surprise to evangelism leaders, who credit an emphasis on personal witnessing and spiritual awakening.

Southern Baptists set a record in 1972 with 445,725 baptisms. Since then, the number has gone up and down, reaching as low as 336,050 in 1978. In the 1994 church year, Southern Baptist churches reported 378,463 baptisms.

Last year Southern Baptists participated in their first simultaneous witnessing effort. Church members were challenged to share Jesus 60 times in 60 days, and churches were encouraged to host revival services following the personal witnessing thrust. The effort was known as "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now."

The campaign called attention to every Christian's responsibility to share Jesus, said Darrell Robinson, Home Mission Board vice president for evangelism. "God is at work all the time, but when we have an intentional emphasis (on evangelism), we reach more people. I commend local churches for getting back to the basics."

While all churches did not participate in "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now," those that did reported success, said Bill Jagers, evangelism director for Kentucky Convention. He recalled a Kentucky woman who committed to

Winston Association reported 206 baptisms last year, the first time it had more than 200 baptisms in at least 10 years, said Director of Missions Paul Blanchard.

share the gospel 60 times in 60 days. When she was sick and had to stay home, she ordered pizza so she could witness to the delivery person.

Winston (Miss.) Association reported 206 baptisms last year, the first time it had more than 200 baptisms in at least 10 years, said Director of missions Paul Blanchard.

In that association, Good Hope Church

increased baptisms from zero in 1994 to 56 in 1995. One key to the church's turnaround is a new pastor committed to frequent personal witnessing, Blanchard said. Sunday School classes were reorganized to be more outreach-oriented, church members were trained in soul-winning, and the church began a regular outreach visitation program. Average Sunday School attendance at the rural church went from 40 to 120, Blanchard said.

The current emphasis on prayer and spiritual awakening results in people being sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leadership and to the needs of lost people, Robinson said.

"Celebrate Jesus 2000," a five-year strategy to share the gospel in every household in America, seeks to build on that movement, Robinson said. "Celebrate Jesus 2000 is not top-down planning. It's a grassroots movement. We simply acknowledge it and fan the flame."

The strategy involves training, prayer, personal witnessing, evangelistic crusades, and publicity.

The Baptist Record

VOLUME 120 (ISSN-0005-5778) NUMBER 12
Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$8.35 per year payable in advance. Second class postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Southern Baptist Press Association.

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Postmaster: Send changes of address to **THE BAPTIST RECORD**, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Send news, communication, and address changes to **The Editor, BAPTIST RECORD**, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 (601) 968-3800.

Home Mission Board's Lewis cites 10 reasons for praise

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Last year's increase in baptisms and church starts are two of many reasons Southern Baptists should praise God, said Home Mission Board President Larry L. Lewis.

In his annual year in review address to Home Mission Board directors, Lewis called the past 12 months "a year of tremendous victories and how we thank God for that."

Southern Baptists reported 393,811 baptisms in 1995, 4% more than the previous year. Lewis also noted it is the second straight year baptisms grew.

Meanwhile, the denomination added 1,458 new congregations last year, the second-highest number of new Southern Baptist congregations since the 1950s, he noted.

"While all of the mainline denominations have been going backwards in membership and in number of churches over these past several years, Southern Baptists have had continuing increase, not only in churches but in members as well."

Southern Baptists now have 40,120 constituted churches and 5,716 church-type missions for a

total of 45,836 congregations.

Eight other accomplishments Lewis said warrant praise were:

- more professions of faith from ministry missionaries' work. Ministry section missionaries recorded 48,768 professions of faith. That is a 9% increase from 1994 and an average of 12 per missionary. "The average Southern Baptist church only averages about eight baptisms per year," Lewis said.

- a record \$38.9 million given to the 1995 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions.

- laborers for the harvest. The board's Missionary Personnel Department communicated last year with 1,000 prospective missionaries, Lewis said. The board ended 1995 with 4,857 home missions personnel.

- new church planting system. The board's extension section launched a church planting pilot project in eight states to mentor new church pastors and encourage them to start other congregations.

- Home Mission Board's move to Alpharetta. "Through the sale of our Spring Street property plus the capital funds provided by the SBC

and over \$2 million in gifts from individuals, we've been able to move into this new building debt-free."

- Start Something New. More than 700 Southern Baptist leaders attended a meeting in February to kick off Start Something New, the denomination's emphasis for church growth through new units,

including new worship services, churches, ministries, and Sunday School classes.

- Celebrate Jesus 2000. Southern Baptists are working with other evangelical Christians for a witnessing thrust for the rest of the millennium.

- Crossover Atlanta and New Orleans. Southern Baptists record-

ed 1,408 professions of faith during the annual evangelism emphasis preceding the Southern Baptist Convention last year. Preparations are being made for this year's event in New Orleans, he added.

"It thrills my heart that when Southern Baptists come to town for a convention we leave more than just our money," Lewis said.

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HMB directors choose Miss. pastor Martin as chairman

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Mississippi pastor Greg Martin of Long Beach was elected chairman of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) directors during their April 17 meeting in Alpharetta, Ga.

Martin, pastor of Commission Road Church, Long Beach, served as the board's first vice chairman before being elected chairman. In other board elections, four positions were filled without contest.

Kenneth Cheek, pastor of Northridge Church, Northport, Ala., was elected first vice chairman. John Avant, pastor of Coggin Avenue Church, Brownwood, Texas, was elected second vice chairman. Cloma Odom of Centerville, Ga., was re-elected secretary, as was assistant secretary Marti Hefley of Hannibal, Mo.

The directors also supported the use of 13 "incorporators" to establish a new missions agency, but objected to authorizing that group to nominate the new agency's president and board officers.

HMB trustees offered their own proposal for a presidential search committee which would double HMB representation in selecting the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) first leader.

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) restructuring, approved by messengers at last year's SBC sesquicentennial meeting in

Atlanta, calls for dissolving the HMB, the Brotherhood Commission, and the Radio & Television Commission, and assigning their duties to a newly-created NAMB.

The SBC Executive Committee's Implementation Task Force (ITF) proposed naming 13 "incorporators" (including two HMB representatives) to help establish the North American Mission Board, nominate a president, and propose officers for the agency's board of directors.

Outgoing HMB chairman Steve Swofford praised ITF members for their attitude during meetings with Home Mission Board leadership.

"We have been very, very well received by the ITF," he said after the board meeting. "But nobody likes change, and when change is brought about in strange and new ways, it's very hard for us to deal with."

The task force asked HMB board members to ratify a resolution that would have positioned them as supporting nomination powers for the incorporators. Instead, directors passed three resolutions related to restructuring, including one that proposed an alternative structure for a

president search committee.

"I think they're frustrated," said Swofford, pastor of First Church, Rockwall, Texas, of the HMB trustees' action. "They just to some degree have felt left out of the process."

The first resolution affirmed using incorporators, but added "we do not endorse the incorporators serving as a presidential search committee or as a nominating committee for the board officers."

The second resolution appointed board members John Avant, a Brownwood, Texas, pastor, and Charles Fuller, a Roanoke, Va., pastor, as the two HMB representatives to the incorporators.

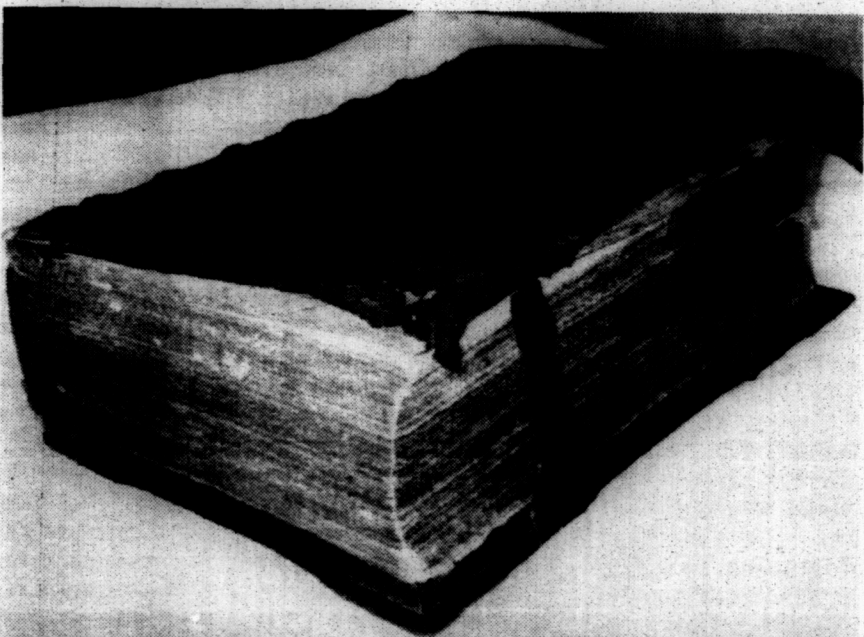
The third resolution, proposed by Billy Bissell, pastor of Boston Avenue Church, Muskogee, Okla., recommended forming a presidential search committee separate from the incorporators.

Also during the meeting, board members:

- established a department of ethnic evangelism. That position would be similar to an existing position for the office of black evangelism, Kelley said.

- elected Benjamin F. Kelley Jr. to be director of HMB development. Kelley currently serves as development director for the Brotherhood Commission.

- learned the administrative committee will employ Missouri writer James Hefley to write a history of the Home Mission Board.



Rare Bible given to MUW

This rare, first edition of a Cramer Bible — printed in Germany in 1625 and given an assessed worth of \$100,000 — has been donated to Mississippi University for Women (MUW), Columbus, by an anonymous benefactor. Only two other first editions of the 17th century Bible are known to be in the United States, and the volume is very rare anywhere else in the world. The volume donated to MUW has an even greater value because its original covers and binding are preserved. (Note its closed hinges.) Translated by Daniel Cramer — a 16th century commentator, interpreter, and translator of things biblical — it is Martin Luther's version of the Bible and contains his interpretations, preface, and marginal notes. The Cramer Bible will be on public display beginning April 20 at MUW's Fant Memorial Library, beginning with a 9-10 a.m. reception.

Mississippi retreat facilities damaged in April 14 storm

By Tim Nicholas

Two of Mississippi Baptists' three retreat facilities, Gulfshore Assembly at Pass Christian and Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko, suffered damage from a storm system that hit the state on Sunday, April 14.

The state's third retreat facility, Camp Garaywa in Clinton, reported no damage.

Gulfshore Manager Frank Simmons said that at about 2:30 p.m., a severe line of weather moved across the Gulf Coast with tornado warnings and strong winds with heavy rain.

The state Acteens Conference had adjourned the previous day and the facility was empty, he said.

Gulfshore lost about 20 plate glass windows, mainly in the "B" wing above the bookstore; two small windows in the cafeteria; and one window each on the third floor and first floor office areas and in the nursery area, Simmons reported.

"We lost about 30 pieces of patio furniture," plus some of the suspended ceiling in the nursery hallway with insulation scattered in the trees and grass, he said.

Simmons said a preliminary estimate of damages is in the \$10,000-\$15,000 range.

He said that in addition to the good fortune of having no guests, "after the wind blew out the windows, we didn't have water damage in those rooms."

Central Hills Manager Dan West said the 560-acre retreat center lost 300-400 pine and hardwood trees to a storm system that moved through Attala County at about 3:30 p.m.

Hardest hit was the riding barn roof, with 45 pieces of tin blown off and damage to

the framework, West said.

Power lines were down leading to the barn, recreational vehicle park, and swimming pool, but service was restored by power company employees, he reported.

West said the retreat is in need of a volunteer construction crew to reframe the barn roof and replace the tin that blew off.

Just a day before the storm hit Central Hills, the state Baptist disaster relief task force was in training at the facility, dedicating a new mass feeding unit that will be housed there.



Mississippi Baptist disaster relief coordinator Paul Harrell, director of the Brotherhood Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, leads the dedication service for the new mass feeding unit of the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Ministry. The service was held April 13 at Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko, where the new unit will be housed. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

Musicians' program keyed to praise and inspiration

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — A program of choirs and other musical groups, hymn singing, and dramatic vignettes will be featured during the 1996 Southern Baptist Church Music Conference.

The conference, which is marking its 40th year, will meet June 9-10 at First Church, New Orleans, preceding the June 11-13 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in the city's Superdome.

The conference's program, session by session, will be:

— 1:45 p.m. June 9: concerts by the Oklahoma Baptist Symphony and the Moses Hogan Chorale of New Orleans.

— 6:45 p.m. June 9: worship service and presentations of the choral anthem and hymn commissioned each year by the conference. The anthem, by Michael Cox, professor of music theology and composition at Southwestern Seminary, is titled, "Easter Morning." The hymn, by R.G. Huff, minister of music at University Heights Church, Colorado Springs, Colo., is titled, "Come, People of Our Lord." Performing the compositions, along with other

music, will be the combined choirs of First Church, New Orleans; First Church, Kenner, La.; and First Church, Baton Rouge.

— 8:30 a.m. June 10: concerts by the Mississippi College Chamber Choir and Louisiana Baptist Children's Honor Choir; seminars on "Computers and Music," led by Bill Tiemann, minister of music, Buena Vista Church, Owensboro, Ky.; "Hymnology," Harry Eskew, professor of hymnology at New Orleans Seminary; and "Change and Stress," Harles Cone, a management consultant from Liberty, Mo.; and small-group discussions led by Green; Gerald Ray, minister of music, First Church, Houston; Larry Black, minister of music, First Church, Jackson; J.M. Wood, music minister, First Church, Brandon; and Bill Roper, minister of music, First Church, Montgomery, Ala.

— 1:30 p.m. June 10: second session for seminars; concert by Oklahoma Baptist University's Bison Glee Club.

— 7 p.m. June 10: worship service and concert by the adult choir and orchestra of First Church, Houston.

Fanini will address SBC's Hispanics and evangelists

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Brazilian pastor Nilson Fanini, president of the Baptist World Alliance, will be among the featured speakers during the June 8 worship celebration of the Ninth Annual National Southern Baptist Hispanic Fellowship Conference.

The conference, to be conducted in Spanish in the chapel of New Orleans Seminary, is one of several meetings preceding the June 11-13 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in the city's Superdome.

Hispanics account for 3,800 churches in the SBC, encompassing more than a half million members.

Fanini will also share his vision of World Evangelism at the annual breakfast business meeting of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists June 11, 7:30 a.m., at New Orleans Holiday Inn Superdome during the Southern Baptist Convention.

Fanini will also speak at the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists June 12, 1-4 p.m. at French Market Forum, Hyatt Hotel. Other speakers at the Wednesday afternoon meeting include Evangelist Eddie Martin, Lancaster, Penn.; Tom Cox, Mountainburg, Ark.; and Jerry Rankin, president of the Foreign Mission Board.

Special disaster relief feeding unit supplies up to 20,000 meals daily

By Tim Nicholas

A new Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief mass feeding unit was dedicated during a disaster relief task force training session April 12-13 at Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko.

The new unit, which replaces a unit in use since 1978, was designed by on-site disaster coordinator Jim Didlake of Brandon and the volunteers who supervise crews during actual disasters.

Didlake is a consultant in the Brotherhood Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

The new unit is equipped with tilt skillets and a commercial steamer, and can serve 15,000-20,000 hot meals per day.

Sleeping facilities are also provided for up to nine crew members.

The 1985-model, 48-foot Great Dane trailer is totally self-contained, with both central air conditioning and heating, and is fully equipped with both ham radio and cellular telephone communications.

Cost of purchase and renovation was under the \$65,000 set aside from the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering.

Training for 96 task force members included an update on

cardiopulmonary resuscitation; a report on New Madrid earthquake readiness; and hands-on experience using equipment on the new disaster unit.

The men held a discussion on caregiving during time of disaster, while the women trained in child care ministry.

Mickey Caison, coordinator of disaster relief for Southern Baptists and a staffer with the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, said that within the next 15 years, "there is a 50% chance of significant seismic activity on the New Madrid Fault."

The New Madrid Fault, which runs from southern Illinois through eastern Arkansas, has produced three of the largest earthquakes in history.

Mississippi's closeness to the fault means that much of the state could be devastated by another large quake, depending on the magnitude of the temblor and its location along the fault.

Glenn Nace, pastor of Kokomo Church, Kokomo, and a disaster relief task force member, served in California after the 1994 Los Angeles earthquake and during the aftershocks there.

He said he was asked how long

a tremor lasts. He replied, "Long enough to get a pair of pants and one shoe on."

Caison said there is a need for churches to be designated as emergency shelters.

Facilities that enter into agreements with the American Red Cross are reimbursed for any damages, he said, and shower facilities can be brought in on mobile units.

When a disaster hits, said Caison, it can be said in the community, "If you need help, you go to First Baptist Church."

He said that six months later they'll come back and "you can take an opportunity to tell them about Jesus."

Caison pointed out that Baptists can make their church into a "safe haven. Isn't that what a church is supposed to be?"

Paul Harrell, disaster relief coordinator for Mississippi Baptists and state Brotherhood director, said he has written all Mississippi directors of missions, requesting churches become designated as shelters.

For more information, contact Didlake at MBCB Brotherhood Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Preaching, worship conference scheduled for Tupelo, May 13-14

The Mississippi Conference of Preaching and Worship will be held at Calvary Church, Tupelo on May 13-14.

The conference, sponsored by the Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries (C-A-P-M) Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will provide an in-depth workshop on Bible preaching that includes

practical help on sermon preparation and delivery. Among the speakers and subjects at the conference are:

— Stan Fornea, pastor of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton: Preaching the Centrality of the Cross; Preaching Through Use of Sermon Titles; and Preaching the Great Themes of Jesus.

— Argile Smith, professor of preaching at New Orleans Seminary: Connecting the Bible and People; Evaluating Worship Trends; Shaping Sermons; and Delivery with Passion.

— Brian Harbour, pastor of

First Church, Richardson, Texas: The Task of Preaching; Where Do Sermons Come From?; What I Have Learned About Worship; and In the Beginning and In Conclusion.

— Bob Robinson, pastor of First Church, Tupelo: leading the conference's praise times, music features, and worship times.

There is no charge for the conference. Meals and child care are not provided.

For more information and to obtain a registration form, contact CAPM at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Fornea



Robinson



Smith

Hawaii MK conference scheduled for July

Calling all missionary kids (MKs)!

You are invited to attend "Mission Meeting '96" in Honolulu, Hawaii, July 26-31. This is the first international MK meeting of this size and is sponsored by International MK Fellowship, Inc., of Dallas. Special airfare, with prices ranging from \$915 to \$1,395 (depending on where you live), is available for those living in America through Imperial Tours (1-800-299-0050).

The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) of Birmingham is handling the registration (1-800-419-0561). MKs may register by mail: Mission Meeting '96, Box 727, Birmingham, AL 35201-0727.

Program personalities will include Willa Dorsey, Doug Oldham, Barbara Tucker, Dick Baker, and Bible teachers and speakers. Recreation and fellowship will be a major part of the program.

Missionary kids, missionaries, and interested lay persons are urged to clear their calendars, register with the WMU, and make travel plans. Pastors, parents, and friends are urged to encourage the attendance of MKs.

1995 SBC statistics include mixture of gains and losses

NASHVILLE (BP) — Increases in Southern Baptist church membership, baptisms, and number of churches led 1995 statistical gains for the denomination in a year that included a mixture of gains and losses in reporting areas.

The 1994-95 church year marked the second year of a new reporting process for the Annual Church Profile completed by individual churches. The 1995 totals are statistically comparable to 1994, except in two categories, but not to earlier years, said Cliff Tharp, supervisor of the Baptist Sunday School Board's strategic information unit.

Church membership climbed to 15,668,077 in 1995, a gain of 48,165 or 0.3% over 1994. Baptisms for the year totalled 393,811, an increase of 15,348 or 4.1% over the previous year. The ratio of baptisms to total church membership was 1:40, a slight improvement over the 1994 ratio of 1:41. Other church membership additions — transfer of church letter, joining by statement — totaled 468,737 in 1995, a decrease of 582 or 0.1% from the 1994 total of 469,319.

The number of churches topped 40,000, increasing from the 1994 total of 39,910 to 40,120, a gain of 210. Church-type missions operated by churches decreased by 195 or 4.6% to a 1995 total of 4,026.

In church program areas, music ministry enrollment/participation registered a 2.2% increase of 40,171 to a new total enrollment of 1,881,754.

Small decreases were reported in Woman's Missionary Union and Sunday School enrollments.

WMU enrollment dropped by 43,427 or 3.9% to a new total of 1,061,279 while Sunday School enrollment declined by 55,698 or 0.7% to a new total of 8,207,860.

Significant changes in collection processes for discipleship training and Brotherhood enrollment/participation make the 1995 totals statistically noncomparable with 1994, according to Tharp.

The discipleship training enrollment/participation total was 2,171,993. Changes in reporting for 1995 were implemented to get more accurate totals, he said. The 1994 total was 2,223,955.

In Brotherhood enrollment/participation, the 1995 total was 749,310. For the first time, both men and women who participated in certain mission projects or mission action groups were included in the total. Also, enrollment in EZRA was included for the first time. EZRA is a coeducational approach to missions activities for children. World Changers was a separate item for the first time. These were major factors in the total representing a 15.9% increase.

Sunday morning worship attendance totaled 4,562,639 for 1995, an increase of 131,180 or 3% over the 1994 total of 4,431,459. Tharp emphasized this figure represents the attendance in churches on the last Sunday of the associational year and is not necessarily an average for the year.

In financial areas, total tithes, offerings, and special gifts for the year were \$5,635,014,266, an increase of \$62,562,438 or 1.1% over 1994. Total receipts were \$6,069,724,030, a decrease of \$10,708,294 or 0.2%. Total mis-

sion expenditures registered a gain of 5.3% or \$43,138,681 to a 1995 total of \$858,779,214.

The value of church property escalated to \$29,103,227,053, an increase of 12.7% or \$3,271,186,508.

While annual statistics have traditionally been reported in February, Tharp said delays in distribution of the 1995 Annual Church Profile software and continuing adjustments to process changes at associational, state, and SBC levels resulted in a later release.

"In most cases, the primary responsibility for checking and verifying church statistics is now done by associations and state conventions because they are more knowledgeable about individual churches in their areas," Tharp said. "As a result of this partnership, we use the totals states provide to obtain denominational-wide totals, a more valid measure of growth or decreases. We are in a learning process that will see continuing improvements."

For 1995, the Sunday School Board received approximately 95% of ACP data electronically. Software for 1996 is being distributed to state conventions on schedule in April.

Thursday, April 25, 1996

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Lamar Association dedicates chapel built by Brotherhood

On March 23, a dedication service was held for the chapel that Lamar Association Brotherhood constructed at the Little Black Creek Water Park, Purvis. This was the project of the Brotherhood of the churches in the association to raise the money and construct this chapel for worship services for the campers.

There were nearly 70 different persons involved in the construction of the building. It was completed in four working days. When Jesse Palmer, associational Brotherhood director, heard of the desire to have such a building he began making plans immediately.

Richard Miley, pastor of Richburg Church, was the job superintendent and also preached the dedication message.

The ministry at the Little Black Creek Water Park was started nine years ago with worship services provided by volunteers from the associational churches. Herlon Pierce, executive director of the Pat Harrison Waterways, said, "this is the only chapel that has been built in any of the camping areas." The first worship service was held the following Sunday with 41 worshipers present. Doug Benedict is Lamar Association director of missions.

Scalia stirs national debate with Jackson prayer breakfast speech

By William H. Perkins Jr.

U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia's remarks on faith and miracles at a prayer breakfast in Jackson April 9 ignited a national discussion on the role of religion in American public life.

Scalia told the 650 people attending Mississippi College School of Law's Christian Legal Society prayer breakfast that the "worldly wise" cannot bring themselves to accept miracles and consider Christians "...well, simple-minded."

He urged attendees to have courage when their faith is taken for stupidity by people who consider themselves intellectuals.

"One can be sophisticated and still believe," he said.

Barry Lynn, head of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, criticized Scalia in an April 10 copyrighted USA Today story.

"This certainly undermines public confidence in his objectivity regarding religious controversies," Lynn said.

James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said in an April 10 copyrighted story in The Washington Post that it was appropriate for Scalia to present his views, but Dunn disagreed that Christians are persecuted.

"This is becoming a modern myth that religion is somehow

persecuted in American life. It's a right-wing litmus test. If you don't say religion is being beat up on, you aren't pitifully correct. Everyone is competing to see who can whine the loudest..." Dunn said.

Baptist Press reported that later on the evening of April 10, Dunn appeared on Cable News Network's (CNN) "Crossfire" with Yale University law professor Stephen Carter, author of the best-selling book, *The Culture of Disbelief*.

Carter, whose book argues for a more visible public role for religion in American life, contended Scalia would not have stirred such controversy if he had been talking about almost any other aspect of life.

"Since he mentioned his faith and its importance to him in life, suddenly there's an uproar," Carter said.

Dunn said he doesn't challenge Scalia's Christian testimony, but he does take issue with Scalia's observation that American society is irreligious and awash in Christian-bashing.

"I just don't believe that's true," Dunn said.

Scalia's speech was also a hot topic on national radio talk shows.

Conservative radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh logged a number of calls April 10 from listeners supporting Scalia, while

nationally-syndicated radio commentator Paul Harvey used his air time on April 10 to discuss the justice's remarks.



Scalia

Evangelists' Profile

This space is dedicated to Mississippi men and women who have committed themselves to vocational evangelism. Churches are encouraged to take advantage of their talents in helping to reap the harvest.

This week's evangelist

Chester Estes Jr.
Union

Years in Ministry: 44

Education: Clarke College, William Carey College, Mississippi College, New Orleans Seminary, Luther Rice Seminary

Years of service: Alabama, Florida, Mississippi
Ministry: Evangelist and teacher of Prayer

SBC Annual Meeting — New Orleans, June 11-13, 1996

"If My People..." — 2 Chron. 7:14

New Orleans June SBC forecast: 19,000 expected

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists return to the Louisiana Superdome for their annual national convention meeting — the ninth time the SBC has met in New Orleans — but the attendance will be about one-half that of the last time there, according to SBC Registration Secretary Lee Porter.

The June 11-13 annual meeting, the convention's 139th session in 151 years of existence, will draw about 19,000 messengers, Porter said. In 1990, the last time the SBC met in the Crescent City, 38,403 messengers registered. The largest SBC regis-

tration was in 1985 in Dallas when 45,519 registered, and the Texas city again will be the site of the annual meeting in 1997.

Last year in Atlanta, for the SBC's 150th anniversary, 20,654 messengers were registered. The numbers do not include guests or visitors.

Who can register as a messenger is dictated by Article III of the SBC constitution. Messengers of the convention are "members of missionary Baptist church cooperating with the Convention as follows:

"1. One messenger from each church which (1) is in friendly cooperation with

the Convention and sympathetic with its purposes and work. Among churches not in cooperation with the Convention are churches which act to affirm, approve, or endorse homosexual behavior. And, (2) Has been a bona fide contributor to the Convention's work during the fiscal year preceding.

"2. One additional messenger from each such church for every 250 members; or for each \$250 paid to the work of the Convention during the fiscal year preceding the annual meeting.

"3. The messengers shall be appointed

and certified by the churches to the Convention, but no church may appoint more than 10.

"4. Each messenger shall be a member of the church by which he is appointed."

Porter said contributions to "convention" causes or work includes giving through the Cooperative Program or directly to a SBC agency, like the Foreign Mission Board's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering or the Home Mission Board's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering or to World Hunger, but not to special offerings of state conventions or associations.

Schaller, Sweet will headline WMU meeting

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Addresses by Southern Baptist missions agency presidents and authors Lyle Schaller and Leonard Sweet, along with the election of a new national president, will highlight the June 9-10 Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting.

The yearly gathering of WMU leaders and members will be held at the New Orleans Marriott on Sunday and Monday prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. Sessions begin at 2:30 p.m. Sunday afternoon and conclude Monday evening.

Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, will speak on Sunday afternoon. The session also will feature testimonies by home missionaries Herbert Martin of New Orleans and Carol Zimmerman of Baltimore and a recognition of other home missionaries attending the meeting.

The Sunday evening session will highlight foreign missions. The evening will include testimonies by foreign missionaries Vivian Boyle from Tanzania and Susie Edworthy from Poland and a message by Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin.

Schaller will deliver the keynote address Monday afternoon. The author of more than 40 books and 1,000 articles, Schaller is known as one of the nation's most influential church growth analysts and leaders among

American Protestants. He currently serves as research associate with the National Evangelistic Association.

Sweet, dean of theology at Drew University, Madison, N.J., will deliver the message during the closing session of the meeting. The founder of SpiritVenture Ministries, Sweet is the author of more than 100 articles and 11 books, including the best-seller **FaithQuakes**.

The morning and afternoon sessions on Monday will highlight the work of WMU. The Monday morning session will include addresses by WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien and WMU President Carolyn Miller.

In the afternoon, an address by Diana Garland, Gheen's professor of Christian family ministry at Southern Seminary, will help launch Project HELP: Child Advocacy, WMU's 1996-97 ministry project. Other activities during the session will be the introduction of the 1996 Actee's panels and the election of national WMU officers for 1996-97.

Julie Rawls from Oklahoma City will lead the music during the two-day meeting. Soloist for the meeting will be Doris DeHaney from Pike Road, Ala. Special music presentations will be made on Monday evening by the Oklahoma Baptist Symphony and The Centurymen.

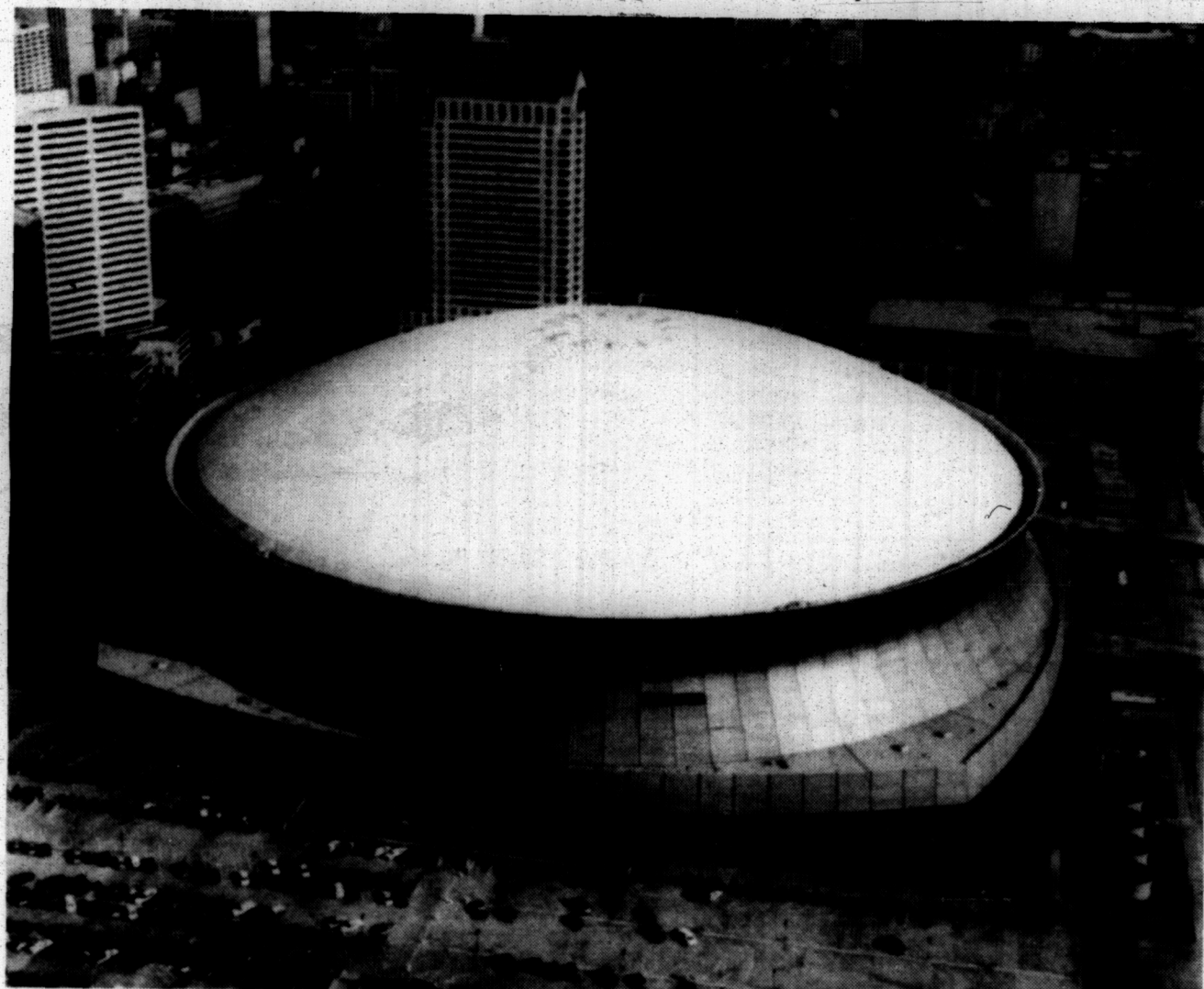
Evangelists to hear FMB President Jerry Rankin

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin will be among the featured speakers at the 38th annual Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists June 12.

The Wednesday afternoon program will be held from 1-4 in the Hyatt Regency Hotel's French Market Exhibit Hall in New Orleans. The conference traditionally is held during the Wednesday break when no Southern Baptist Convention business sessions are scheduled.

Three keynote speakers will address different aspects of the conference theme, "Share His Love." Evangelist Eddie Martin of Lancaster, Pa., will speak on "Through Witnessing"; evangelist Tom Cox of Mountainburg, Ark., and president of the conference, on "Through the Preached Word"; and Rankin, on "Proclaimed Around the World."

More than a dozen music evangelists also will be featured as part of the program.



The annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention will be held in the Superdome in New Orleans, June 11-13. Approximately 19,000 messengers are expected to gather under the theme "If My People..." — from 2 Chronicles 7:14 — to choose a president and vote on budgetary concerns.

Pastors' Conference focus will be world missions "Fruit that Remains"

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — "Fruit That Remains" is the theme of the 1996 Pastors' Conference — and more.

"Fruit That Remains" is integral to world missions, said Johnny Hunt, president of the annual conference preceding the Southern Baptist Convention.

"What really matters is not decisions, but disciples," said Hunt, pastor of First Church, Woodstock, Ga.

The June 9-10 Pastors' Conference will precede the SBC annual meeting June 11-13 in New Orleans' Superdome.

June 9, 6:30-9:15 p.m., "Fruit That Remains in the Family": Jerry

Vines, co-pastor, First Church, Jacksonville, Fla.; Fred Lowrey, pastor, First Church, Bossier City, La.; and Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Church, Cordova, Tenn.

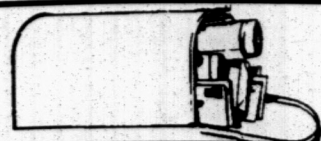
June 10, 8:30-11:30 a.m., "Fruit That Remains in the Church": Junior Hill, evangelist from Hartselle, Ala.; Ken Hemphill, president, Southwestern Seminary; Tom Elliff, pastor, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla.; and James Merritt, pastor, First Church, Snellville, Ga.

June 10, 1:15-4:30, "Fruit That Remains in America": Ron Phillips, pastor, Central Church, Hixson, Tenn.; Ronnie Floyd, pastor, First Church, Springdale, Ark.,

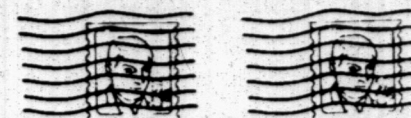
and chairman of the SBC Executive Committee; Bailey Smith, evangelist from Atlanta; and Phil Hoskins, pastor, Higher Ground Church, Kingsport, Tenn.

June 10, 6:30-9:15 p.m., "Fruit That Remains in the World": Jay Slack, evangelist from Orlando, Fla.; Henry Blackaby, **Experiencing God** coauthor and director of prayer and spiritual awakening for the Home Mission Board; and John Bisagno, pastor, First Church, Houston.

Among featured musicians during the conference will be Larnelle Harris; Newsong; the Gold City Quartet; and the Jim Bob Griffin Family.



Letters to the editor



Church is to worship

Editor:

I have received and enjoyed the articles of **The Baptist Record** since 1973. Recently one of the "First Person" articles was entitled "If churches were Wal-Mart." In the past few years, as the churches of our day are geared more and more into a worldly-type of evangelism I think of how it used to be; but,

more than that, I think of how it was in Palestine this year and this week some 2,000 years ago. I see as the New Testament unfolded the panorama of our Lord and Savior's teaching of how he personally instructed us and gave us a "foot-to-the-prayer" type example of how our churches were not supposed to be. When the temple in his day turned into a first century Wal-Mart he personally took time to turn the place upside

down and drive the cashiers out with a whip.

When we enter the sanctuary, our mind, our soul, and our total being should be focused on Jesus. Our sole purpose is to give him our total attention without being concerned with the fellow next to us/or having personal visitation periods. Anything that takes our attention away from him is Satan's ploy to turn our attention away from him and a form of

environmental idolatry.

Our praise and worship time suffers; and we wonder why we don't "feel" or "see" a more active move of God! We as born again believers should save our visiting and our attention-giving for fellowships and other meeting times. During the sanctuary time, which is our collective praise and worship time, our attention should be turned to Jesus and stay only on him.

Pam Thomas
Louisville

To avoid a tragedy

Editor:

How sad when there is strife in a church. Sadder still if it could have been prevented with a more thorough background check before the pastor was called. There are many fine men of God leading our churches today, praise the Lord. However, not all who fill the pulpit do so with God's calling or his loving spirit.

There is the case of a preacher with a domineering personality who has split the past three churches where he has been in the leadership role. If only the second or third pulpit committees had known more about his past experiences.

When seeking a pastor, please use all resources available to you. Pray for God's guidance and ask a lot of questions of previous acquaintances. The Baptist Convention Board has resumes on pastors and will gladly assist you in your search. There is even someone available who will sit down with your committee to aid you in your consideration of prospects if you request this service.

Use every avenue of opportunity to learn about the person you consider for this vital position. Don't look back one day and say, "I wish we had known sooner."

Name withheld by editor

Helped by a village

Editor:

The negative perspective handed the proverb "It takes a village to rear a child" always amazes me. (Editor's Notebook, April 4 issue). A lovely artistic rendering of that proverb, done by a beautiful young Baptist pastor's wife, hangs in our home to remind us of the love and support of the several "villages" which contributed to the well-being and Christian development of our children — now grown.

Of course, the first responsibility for our children was ours under God's leadership. But we have profound appreciation for the blessings and support of a host of people, including devout church staff persons, lay leadership in all aspects of church life, teachers and recreation leaders, band directors and scouting personnel, parents of our children's friends, neighbors, extended family — and yes, "government" —

from the local, state, and national governmental bodies which made and enforced laws and regulations for the protection and well-being of all of us, to such individuals as the crossing guards at schools. The list could go on and on.

And so, I say "thank you" to all the "villages" where we have lived. I pray that communities will continue to care about children — and love, nurture, and protect them, especially those vulnerable children whose parents cannot or will not do so. And if the "village" doesn't help to rear this group of children...?

Billie Jean Sewell
Pontotoc

"Owes it" to WMU

Editor:

This is "Ole Dot Nelson," 81 years old, wanting to check in about a project which I have determined to begin.

In one of my sleepless nights, I was struck with the idea, foolish though it may be, that I may be able to help the Woman's Missionary Union. I feel that I owe this organization more than I will ever be able to pay.

Miss Minnie Landrum was my Sunbeam leader and introduced me to missions. She later became the executive secretary in Brazil. She was the one who taught me as a barefoot boy to try to sing, "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world."

Hubert Street had as much to do with my becoming a Christian as any other person. He was my Royal Ambassador leader. Most of all, he loved me and wanted me to become "somebody."

During my junior and senior years at college, two or three of "us boys" served as very poor lifeguards with the YWA traveling camp throughout Mississippi. In Virginia, Grace and I had as our first visitor following our marriage, Alma Hunt, who has meant much to me for nearly 55 years. I served as RA camp director in Mississippi and Virginia. In Virginia, in the early days of World War II, Mrs. George Martin volunteered to be the cook if I would lead the camp.

I hope that is enough to tell you how much I owe in my small life to Woman's Missionary Union. Now, with its existence already challenged, I am convinced that within the next few years, WMU will be in crisis. Grace and I are determined to give sacrificially and start a fund which I am calling "Help for a Rainy Day." To that end, to the knowledge of nobody, we are sending [to WMU, SBC] our gift of \$500.

You will, of course, do as you feel led. Nobody will know, not even I, because I do not remember anything that long. God bless you.
Dotson Nelson Jr.
Birmingham, Ala.

The Greatest Gift In The World

Now you can make sharing Jesus part of your everyday life. Naturally. Effectively. Simply. Sensitive. Right where you live, work, and play.

People Sharing Jesus is a breakthrough process by Darrell W. Robinson, head of evangelism for the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention since 1989.

People Sharing Jesus isn't about gimmicks or manipulation. It's about sharing the joy and faith you've found in Christ. Without guilt, anxiety, or awkwardness.

People Sharing Jesus is available at your local Christian bookstore in book form, abridged audio tapes, audio seminar, dramatized video, leader's guide, and special New Testament edition. It's everything you and your church need to build confidence, knowledge, and inspiration for sharing Christ. Just as your Father intended.



Available now at your local Baptist Book Store or any Christian bookstore.



"Darrell Robinson, whose pastor's heart is clear and resounding, has expressed most helpfully in this book the basic features of a spontaneous witness for our living Lord. I recommend *People Sharing Jesus* to all who are experiencing God, and have an inner desire to bear witness to others."
— Henry T. Blackaby, Author, *Experiencing God*

Just for the Record



Union Church, Caesar, held its annual GA/Acteen Coronation on Feb. 11. The theme was "Shine, Jesus, Shine." GAs receiving badges are (from left): front row, are Taylor Lee, Ashley Webb, Arielle Capooth, Sarah Bilbo, Cherry Wilson, Karen Purvis, Krystal Kuhlmann, Stephanie Hayes, Kimberly Boutwell; second row, Stephanie Bilbo, Amanda Spiers, Chassity Seals, Lacy Jeffcoat, and Amy Ledbetter. Not pictured: Angel Jones, Holly and Heather Hogsten, Elysia Boland, Tiffany Craft, and Laurie Purvis. Ashley Glaudi (photo at left) completed her Queen Regency in Service. Luke Rester and Ashley Humphrey were crown bearer and flower girl. Lynn Seals is GA director.

Mississippi Baptist Chaplains Association will hold its annual Spring Retreat at Gulfshore Assembly on May 10-11. Registration and check-in begins at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, and the retreat will end after lunch on Saturday. C. Welton Gaddy, noted author and lecturer from Monroe, La., will be the speaker. Chaplain Barbara Kimbrel will present the music. To make reservations by May 1 call Richard Brogan, Missions Extension Department, (601) 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651.

Michael W. Smith will appear in concert with Jars of Clay and Three Crosses at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson on April 29 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets (\$16.50 and \$19.50) are available at the coliseum box office, local Christian bookstores, and BeBop record shops. Group discounts are available. Call (601) 353-0603 to charge tickets by phone.

Highland Colony Church, Ridgeland, will host an "Experiencing God" weekend on May 3-5. The weekend will begin on Friday, May 3 at 6:45 p.m. For more information, call the church at (601) 856-4031.

College Heights Church in Soldotna, Alaska, is seeking a pastor. The church has an average Sunday School attendance of 70, and has recently completed construction on a new sanctuary. Send resumes to: Kemmer R. Sorrell, search committee chairman, P.O. Box 2307, Soldotna, AK 99669. For more information, call Sorrell at (907) 262-7128.

Metro Association will hold a senior adult celebration at Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, on

Pleasant Ridge Church, Sturgis, will host **The Barnettts** of Stanton, Tenn., in a gospel singing on April 27 at 7 p.m. Larry Haggard is pastor.

Mississippi College's Department of Music will present the following recitals on campus: Janette Bock on April 29 at 8:15 p.m. in Provine Chapel; Margaret Suttle, April 30 at 8:15 p.m. in Aven Auditorium; Linda Gail Jackson and John Bullock, May 1, 3 p.m., Aven Auditorium.

Homecomings

Wesson Church (Copiah): April 28; 10:45 a.m.; lunch following morning service; Holmes Carlisle, guest speaker.

Wake Forest, Sturgis: April 28; noon meal; Phil Gillis, speaker; James Mills, pastor.

Lincoln Road, Hattiesburg: April 28; 11 a.m.; dinner at noon; 1 p.m. singing; Ken Rhodes, Carriere, guest speaker; L.D. Golmon, pastor.

Gum Grove, Brookhaven: April 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.;

worship, 11 a.m.; meal at noon, 1:30 p.m. service; Jimmy Smith, guest speaker; Obediah and the Magnolia State Quartet, music; David Fortenberry, pastor.

Airport, Grenada: May 5; preaching at 11 a.m. by Kerry Nelson; dinner at noon; singing in afternoon by Kerry Nelson.

Sardis (Copiah): May 5; worship service, 11 a.m.; Wilson Murray, Florence, former pastor, guest speaker; "The Prolific Bluegrass," Hattiesburg, music; covered dish meal, noon; Albert Parsons, pastor.

Staying Well Informed

Helping Kids Deal With Hospitalization

Medical play helps ease kids' fears about going to the hospital.

When you're a child, it doesn't get scarier than going to the hospital. Dealing with strange faces, places, and events can be a traumatic experience for young children.

But thanks to a little fellow named Bernard, hundreds of kids have a new friend when they need to go to the hospital. With his big eyes, lovable expression and Band-Aid, Mississippi Baptist Medical Center's puppet mascot Bernard is always ready to help.

Five-year-old Audrey was scheduled to go into the hospital to have her tonsils removed. It was a routine procedure for the doctors, but Audrey remembered the bad stories her friends had told her about hospitals. As a result, she was so terrified that she wouldn't let a doctor or nurse come near without her breaking into tears.

But after she and her parents went through Baptist's Pediatric

Pre-Op program with Bernard, Audrey lost her fears. Afterwards, she and her parents were able to tour the pediatric wing, and meet the doctors and nurses.

With one of Mississippi's first Pediatric Pre-Op programs, MBMC and its Certified Child Life Specialist provide children and their families with a hands-on way to get used to the idea of having an operation. Many of the children and families who have gone through Pediatric Pre-Op have said that the hospitalization experience was much easier, thanks to Bernard and the MBMC staff.

At Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, we're in the business of helping every member of the family, youngest to oldest. Pediatric Pre-Op is scheduled every Monday night. If your child is entering the hospital soon, or you would like more information, please call 948-MBMC or 1-800-948-MBMC.

Understanding the Benefits of Pediatric Medical Play.

Call 948-MBMC or 1-800-948-MBMC for more information.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER

Revival Dates

Thursday, April 25, 1996

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Pope, Pope: April 28-May 1; services, regular time on Sunday and 7 p.m.; Trent F. Grubbs, New Albany, evangelist; Ken Lewis, Pope Church, music; Jimmy C. Bryant, pastor.

East Moss Point, Moss Point: April 28-May 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Michael Staton, speaker; Bobby Lott, music; Alva Ray McCorkle, pastor.

Utica (Metro): May 3-5; 7:30 nightly; Gary Jackson, evangelist; Judy Walker, music; John Ed Snell, pastor.

Bethsaida, Philadelphia: April 28 homecoming, 10:30 a.m. worship, lunch, afternoon singing; April 28-May 1 revival, 7 nightly; Wendell Jones, evangelist; Jerry Guest, pastor.

Burns (Smith): April 26-28; Fri. and Sat., 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Blain McLain, Tillatoba, evangelist; Charles Bonner, pastor.

Bethel, Columbus: April 26-28; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.; David Green, Columbia, evangelist; David Stephens, Bethel Church, music; Ron Harrison, pastor.

Bethel, Drew: youth revival; April 25-27; services, 7 nightly; Thurs., youth fellowship, 6 p.m.; Justin "Fish" Robinson, evangelist; Brian McKay, music; Larry Choucolli, pastor.

Alta Woods, Jackson: April 28-May 1; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Steve Wilson, Brandon, evangelist; John Wells, Pine Bluff, Ark., music; Frank H. Thomas Jr., pastor.

West Poplarville, Poplarville: April 28-May 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jack Teer, Baton Rouge, La., evangelist; Wordie Carroll, Carriere, music.

First, Sledge: April 28-May 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Johnny Sanders, evangelist; Floyd Cooper, pastor.

Spring Creek, Philadelphia: April 28-May 1; 7 nightly; James Young, pastor, Antioch Church, evangelist; Wayne King, pastor.

Hope, Philadelphia: May 2-5; Thurs.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Jimmy McDill, Little Rock, evangelist; William Crenshaw, Hope Church, music; Jimmy Young, pastor.

Neshoba, Union: May 5-9; 6:45 p.m., pre-revival music, service, 7 p.m.; Danny Lanier, Little Rock, evangelist; Lawrence White, Louisville, Ky., music; Johnny Collins, pastor.

Main Street, Mendenhall: May 5-8; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Roger Lee, Simpson County, evangelist; Charlie Case, Hattiesburg, music.

Derrick Simmons, was ordained to the ministry by Pope Church, Pope, March 24. On program were Al Mullan, former pastor of Pope Church; Walter Ballard, director of missions, Panola Association; Jimmy C. Bryant, pastor, Pope Church; G.E. Jolley, former director of missions, Panola Association; and Bill Cole, chairman of deacons. Simmons will serve as pastor of Askew Church, Panola Association. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Simmons of Pope.



Simmons

Twin Lakes Church, Walls, elected **Ralph Stovall** as pastor emeritus. Gary Killen, pastor, presented Stovall a plaque on Sunday morning, March 31. He served as pastor at Twin Lakes Church for 21 years. Stovall, a graduate of Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary, has also served churches in Texas and Tennessee. Available for supply, revivals, and interim pastor, he may be contacted at (601) 781-1843. His address is 5845 Twin Lakes Drive, Walls, MS 38680.



Stovall

Alan Balliet, recently retired, is available for supply, revivals, conferences, and interim. He can be contacted at 5243 Brookleigh Drive, Jackson, MS 39212 or call (601) 371-8655.

Students in the Winters School of Music at William Carey College recently received awards at the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Mississippi Chapter, held recently at Millsaps College in Jackson. They are: Danny Davis, a junior voice major, first place for Upper College Men and Jon Celoria, a sophomore history major, second place; Rebekah Williamson, a senior voice major, second place for Upper College Women; M.

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ALL SIZES
SALES AND RENTALS

Names in the News



The Mississippi Baptist Childhood Education Association recently elected officers. They are: (from left) Angie Boydston, president elect, minister of childhood education at First Church, Hattiesburg; Linda Reeves, president, preschool children's consultant, Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; and Joann White, secretary-treasurer, children's director, Highland Church, Vicksburg.

Don Frazure, a senior, first place award for Upper College Men; Rachel Smith, a senior voice major, third place award for Graduate Level Women; and John Nix, a senior voice major, third place award for Graduate Level Men.

Howard D. Owens, a master of music student from Jackson, will present an organ recital at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, on April 30 at 4 p.m. He will present works by Bach, Karg-Elert, Yon, Reger, Handel, and Wigor. The son of Alex and Jean Owens, he holds a degree from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. He serves as music associate/organist for First Church, Arlington, Texas.

NASHVILLE — Mary Burnett Butler — a former Southern Baptist missionary to Switzerland, wife of a Baptist Sunday School Board editor, and daughter of a pioneer in Vacation Bible School work — died April 12 of cancer. She was 52. In addition to her husband Trent, she is survived by two sons, Curtis and Kevin, both of Nashville; and one brother, Sibley C. Burnett of San Diego, Calif.

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Polly Hargis Dillard, the first woman to teach Christian education at Southern Seminary, died April 11 following a battle with cancer. She was 79. Dillard joined the faculty of the Louisville, Ky., seminary in 1954 as an assistant professor of elementary education.

Seven William Carey College Coast campus students and Janie Baylis, the Baptist Student Union director, traveled and worked in

Atlanta at the Stewart Baptist Mission Center recently. They did cleaning and painting during the mornings and worked with children in an after-school program during the afternoons. Students involved in this mission trip included Ashley Cronenburg, Mobile, Ala.; Myra Johnson, Laurel; Beverly Newborn, Tupelo; Sheila Robnett, Wiggins; Chauncy Gamble, Gulfport; Travis Dyer, Gulfport; and Matt Jackson, Ocean Springs. "I'm glad we got to work together for God. It really brought us closer to each other," said Cronenburg.

Dale Nowell, pastor of Mt. Moriah Church, Choctaw County, will participate in a mission trip to Sweden in October. He will join about 150 other Southern Baptists on the mission trip.

Bozeman, Jackson pastor, dies

Donald N. Bozeman, 50, pastor of Southside Church, Jackson, died of lung failure April 20 at Alabama Medical Center, Birmingham, Ala.



Bozeman

Services were held April 22 at Southside Church with burial in Union Church Cemetery near Magnolia.

Bozeman was a native of Silver Creek. He

was pastor of Southside Church for 14 years. Prior to that he served at First Church, Jackson, La., and First Church, Springfield, La.

Survivors include his wife Patsy, secretary in the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; son Brent of Brandon; daughter Jan of Jackson; brothers Thomas and Sammy, both of Magnolia; sisters Dimples Crosby, Grand Isle, La.; Jewel Hedgepeth, Coker, Ala.; and Bonnie Polk, Magnolia.

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Staff Changes

Calvary Church, Meridian, has called **O. Lyn Nations** as pastor effective April 1. He is a native of Mississippi. His previous place of service was Mize Church, Mize. He has served as associational

Sunday School director and as a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Wake Forest Church, Sturgis, has called **James Mills** as pastor.

Roy Raddin, Washington DOM, to retire June 30

Roy D. Raddin, director of missions for Washington County Association since July 1979, will retire on June 30. Raddin has been a resident of Greenville for 33 years, pastoring Second Church for the first 16 years.

The association has had an active program working with Sunday School, Discipleship Training, WMU, Brotherhood, Music, Stewardship, Pastoral Ministries, Mission Projects, and Family Ministries. Milestones include 17 mission Bible schools conducted for African-American children of Greenville; many mission projects conducted in the association, state, and nation during his tenure. Raddin developed a program to honor pastors on their anniversary Sunday and a reminder system for each congregation.

The association sold the building at the old location for \$119,000 and bought property. A new debt-



Raddin

free associational office was occupied in 1986. A county crusade was held with 238 professions of faith and 66 other decisions and three World Missions conferences were held during the 17 years.

A native of Hattiesburg, Raddin received his bachelor of arts at Mississippi College in 1952, his master of divinity at New Orleans Seminary in 1955, and doctor of ministry, Mississippi Baptist Seminary in 1982. Full-time pastorates include Anguilla Church, Anguilla; Tchula Church, Tchula; and Second Church, Greenville.

He has served as president of Pastors' Conference, on **The Baptist Record** advisory committee, first vice-president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, member of the Education Commission, SBC, and trustee of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, Nashville. He also served as academic dean for West Central Delta Center of the Mississippi Baptist Seminary, Jackson, for 14 years.

Raddin has made nine trips to Israel in a personal study of the Holy Land, and has also visited many other countries.

He is married to the former Myra Corley, and they have two children, David, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City, and Donna Jo, a teacher at Madison-Ridgeland Academy.

The Raddins will be honored with a retirement reception at the Association Building in Greenville on May 5 from 2-4 p.m. They will make their home in Greenville following retirement and he will be available to serve as interim pastor and conference leader.

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FBC Gulfport notes 100th

First Church, Gulfport, will commemorate its 100th anniversary on Sept. 22 capping a celebration that will begin on May 5 when the Singspiration (Senior Adult) Choir will present a musical, "Revival Time: All Day Singing with Dinner on the Grounds."

On Sept. 22, William G. Tanner, pastor of First Church from 1964-68, will be the special guest preacher.

Historical displays will be located throughout the church during this period. First Church was organized on Sept. 19, 1896. First services were held in a one room school building. The first church building, on the corner of 23rd Avenue and 14th Street, was occupied in 1899.

Special services will be held through the week of Sept. 15-22.

Center Ridge, marks 150th

Center Ridge Church, DeKalb (Kemper Association), will observe its 150th anniversary on May 5, beginning with its 11 a.m. worship service. A noon meal will be served at 12:30 p.m., and an afternoon service will be held from 2-4 p.m. There will be no night service.

Franklin McLelland of Butler, Ala., and Jimmy Knight of Laurel will be the guest speakers for the day.

There will be a display of historical items and memorabilia in the church fellowship hall. Gordon Sansing is pastor.

Blue Mountain College sets commencement

Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain will hold its 123rd commencement exercises for the 106 new graduates of the Baptist-affiliated school on Sunday, May 5 in Modena Lowery Berry Auditorium on campus.

Blue Mountain graduate Jimmy D. Porter, pastor of First Church, McComb and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, will deliver the baccalaureate sermon at 11 a.m.

Porter also holds the master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and the doctor of ministry degree from New Orleans Seminary.

He has been active in denominational organizations at the associational, state, and national levels.

Ronnie Musgrove, Mississippi's lieutenant governor and a deacon in First Church, Batesville, will give the commencement address at 3 p.m.

Musgrove is a graduate of the University of Mississippi in Oxford and the University of Mis-

issippi School of Law, also in Oxford.

Before he was elected lieutenant governor in 1995, he served two terms in the Mississippi State Senate.

Musgrove has been active in his church, serving as chair of numerous committees including a pastor search committee. He also teaches youth Sunday School and sings in the church choir.

For more information, contact Blue Mountain College at (601) 685-4771.



Porter



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Uniform The true Vine



By David Mitchell
John 15

The true Vine (vv. 1-3). Many ancient teachers taught as they walked. It is evident from Scripture that Jesus used this method at times. Apparently this walking and teaching was what took place and is recorded in John 15.

We are not certain if Jesus was in an outlying area, noticed a vineyard, and used it as an object lesson, or if he and his disciples were moving toward the Mount of Olives when passing the temple area, and noticed the elaborately embossed golden vine on the front of the temple.

Either case is possible. Perhaps as they walked, noticing the vines, Jesus said, "I am the true Vine" (v. 1). In this comparison, Jesus is the Vine and his heavenly Father is the Gardener who tends and cares for the vine. The gardener cuts off the unproductive branches and carefully prunes the branches which bear fruit to encourage them to be more productive. In this way the vine dresser makes sure that his vines do not grow wild and undisciplined. With his ever-watchful eye, he ensures that these vines will be the most productive vines possible. The metaphor is: as the branches draw strength and nourishment from the vine, so are we sustained and strengthened by abiding in the presence and love of Jesus.

Abiding in the Vine (vv. 4-8). A branch alone is no good. A life lived alone without Christ is no good. A branch cannot live nor produce fruit unless it has a life-sustaining relationship with the vine. For Christians, the fruit that they are to produce firstly is a Christ-like life. They are also to produce other disciples and to manifest the fruits of the Spirit. In our lives, fruit-bearing power comes from the indwelling presence and abiding relationship that we have with Jesus Christ. The closer the relationship, the more fruit we will bear. Verse 6 relates to hell-fire. It is not to be understood in the terms of salvation gained and then lost. Rather, it is a picture of those who never find an abiding relationship with Jesus Christ. These branches are severed from the vine, they dry up, and the only purpose they serve is to be burned. An example of branches that have been severed would be Judas Iscariot and those disciples who gave only lip service to Christ and left him when times of discipline for pruning took place.

In the abiding relationship with the true Vine we have the promise of answered prayer. The marvelous idea presented was that the believer who is firmly grounded and connected to the true Vine may ask anything of the vine dresser and it will be done. This is not a blank-check promise. The point is: disciples of Christ may ask anything of the Father if their lives, character, and will are in conformity with the character and will of Christ.

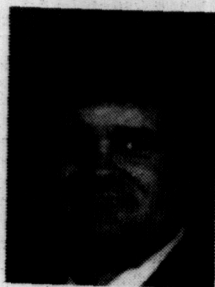
Fruit of the Vine (vv. 9-17). Many examples of the fruit produced by the Vine are given in verses 9-17. The disciple who lives his life grounded in Christ will have a knowledge of the love of Christ (v. 9). He will also have the strength of his love and the knowledge of how that strength can be maintained. Obedience is a mark of discipleship (v. 10). An evident love for siblings is another fruit of the vine. You cannot love the Father without also loving his children (v. 12). Jesus gave us the supreme example of fruit that is born from the life that is abiding in the Father. He proved that he was abiding in the Father when he said, "Not my will but thine be done." There is no greater expression of love than for one to give his own life for another (v. 13).

The disciples took on a new name in verse 14. They were no longer slaves but were referred to as friends of Christ. Jesus had chosen and commissioned them. They were commissioned to go into every part of the world and to share Jesus with others. They were also commanded to have the same kind of abiding relationship with the Father as Jesus had. Because they saw the Son relate to the Father, they knew by his example how they should relate to the Father. Jesus commanded that the disciples have the same type relationship with the Father. They were to live an exemplary life for others to see.

The greatest truth that comes from John 15 is that we are to love each other as we love the Father. Jesus was so interested in his followers loving one another that three times in his farewell to his disciples he gave it as a commandment.

Mitchell is pastor of Van Winkle Church, Jackson.

Bible Book Importance of pure worship



By Clayton Littlejohn
Zephaniah 1, 2, 3

Zephaniah was God's prophet to Judah just prior to the great political and spiritual revival that took place under King Josiah in 621 B.C. (2 Chron. 34-35). Zephaniah's message of judgment for the sin of idolatry may have been the catalyst for the great revival that happened when the Ten Commandments were discovered in the temple. God's announcement of judgment and hope for Judah and the nations reveal that God expects purity of worship from his people.

Condemnation of impure worship (1:4-6). Zephaniah's name means "the Lord has hidden" or "to watch," which suggest that he had watched the false worship that was happening in Judah. He was the great-great-grandson of King Hezekiah (1:1), and a relative of King Josiah. He declared God would bring judgment upon the earth that would include man, beast, fowls, and fish (1:3) when the "day of the Lord" took place (1:7, 8, 14, 18; 2:2, 3).

Judah would be judged because she was involved in false worship, which was being taught by the "Chemarim" (v. 4), who were pagan priests (2 Kings 23:5; Hosea 10:5). They led the people to worship and were led by the stars, or "host of heaven" (v. 5), and to worship the god "Molech" (Molech), which is the god to whom they would sacrifice babies (2 Kings 17:17).

We see these sins repeated today with the tremendous growth in astrology, physics, and abortion of the unborn. God strictly forbids his people to participate in these sins (Deut. 4:19; 18:9-12; Prov. 6:17). These are some of the sins that led to the destruction of the Northern Kingdom Israel (2 Kings 17:18). God expects us to get our guidance from him, not horoscopes and physics.

A call to seek the Lord (2:1-3). God said that Judah was not desired or without shame and that she must come back to him or he would bring severe judgment upon them. They would be like "chaff" (2:2), which is the husk from grain. The chaff would be scattered by the wind or gathered and burned. To avoid this judgment, it was necessary for Judah to "seek the Lord" (v. 3). They must seek righteousness, which would govern how they treat others in society and how they worshipped. They must also seek "meekness." Many believe meekness is weakness. There is nothing further from the truth. Meekness is power under control, and was the term used when a great stallion had been broken and could now be controlled by a three inch bit. The stallion still had all its power, but now that power was under control. God said Moses was "very meek above all the men which were on the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). Jesus was meek (Matt. 11:29) and it is one of the characteristics of the Christian (Matt. 5:5).

A pattern of defiance (3:1-4). Jerusalem was filthy with idolatry and corruption and was marching toward judgment or "woe" (v. 1) because: 1) "She obeyed not the voice; 2) she received not correction; 3) she trusted not in the Lord; 4) she drew not near to her God" (v. 3). This had led the city to be oppressing or tyrannical (v. 1). The "prophets and priests" were promoting sin rather than condemning it. A city, church, and home will never rise above its leaders.

A note of hope (3:9-12). God did judge Judah and will again one day judge all Israel and the world, but there will be a remnant that will survive that will speak with a "pure language," which may mean all speak the same language or a language without any cursing. This remnant would be gathered from all over the world (v. 10), and would be a divine act of God. When this great day comes, God will purge all the evil ones from the righteous ones who will not be "ashamed of all thy doings" (v. 11), or acts of righteousness. There would be in the midst of the remnant afflicted and poor (v. 12), which means humble and depend upon the Lord. We don't know how many make up this remnant, but (Zech. 13:8) said one third of the Jewish population would make up that remnant.

Is there anything in your life personally, or in your church that is impure in worship? If so, repent, forsake, and correct it while there is a chance.

Littlejohn is pastor of Ingram Church, Baldwin.

Life and Work In the right direction



By Linda Donnell
1 Thessalonians 4

Whether we are playing a game, operating a business, or baking a cake, there are certain rules to follow which help us to be successful in the endeavor. The same is true with Christian living. We should not simply accept Christ into our hearts and stand still. The Bible says that we are to get going — we are to grow (2 Peter 3:18).

Paul, too, knew this to be true. He recognized that a Christian's life should be better each day. Progress in living a more Christ-like life was his personal aspiration (Phil. 3:12-14), and he sought to encourage the same in the Thessalonian believers. In today's scripture, the apostle offered some practical instructions for moving in the right direction with Christian life.

Please God (vv. 1-2). While he was with the Thessalonians, Paul had given them instructions on how to live out their Christian faith (v. 1). Their aim was to please God. This is the first directional signal along the Christian walk. Pleasing God is not an either-or proposition. It is an inevitable necessity.

Paul also reminded his readers that the instructions given them were not from him, but from "the Lord Jesus." It was important that they understand he was not concerned merely with human instructions. The major focus of Bible study today is to direct Christians in how to better please God. It offers guidance, comfort, correction, and encouragement — all needed elements to give us direction.

Control your body (vv. 3-8). The Thessalonian believers were especially vulnerable at the point of sexual immorality. They lived in a culture of sexual laxity; chastity was an unknown virtue. Ritual fornication was a routine part of many worship activities. This was probably the reason for Paul's emphasis and call for sexual purity.

In verse 3 Paul made it clear that it was God's will that they live sexually pure lives. Instead of allowing their passions to go unbridled, they were to allow God complete control (vv. 4-5). "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (v. 7). This places before us today, just as to the Thessalonians, the uncompromising demands of Christian morality. In a day when our culture, too, has a decidedly lax attitude toward sexual behavior, we should be careful to read these directional instructions offered by Paul.

Love each other (vv. 9-10). After exhorting his readers to purity, the apostle then urged them to love (v. 9). He admitted that the new believers were already doing this, but he encouraged them to let their love grow and manifest itself even more. Christians headed in the right direction today also need Paul's encouragement to love more and more. When we yield to God's will, he teaches (through the Holy Spirit) us to love; but according to Roman 13:8, love is the only debt never fully paid.

It is love that is the benchmark of the Christian life. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). The better we get to know Christ, the more we love him, then the more that love spills out to our fellow man.

Mind your own business (vv. 11-12). Paul taught that Christians should be industrious and attend to their own business. Some of the new believers, in their excitement and anticipation concerning the second coming, had stopped working and had become busybodies. They may have even encouraged their friends to give up their work in anticipation of the second coming. Whatever the case, this idleness and its influence on others bothered Paul.

In effect, what Paul was telling the Thessalonian church was that the best way in which Christ could come and find them was quietly, efficiently, and diligently doing their daily job. To go on as they were doing, allowing their Christianity to turn them into useless citizens, was to bring discredit to the name of Christ.

Christians heading in the right direction will work and mind their own business, quietly earning the respect of others. They will show that our Christianity makes us better workmen, truer friends, kinder men and women. This lifestyle is the best sermon that can be preached.

Are you headed in the right direction in your Christian walk? How will you seek to please God daily?

Donnell is a member of First Church, Hattiesburg.

capsules

CHURCH TO PAY \$7 MILLION TO BONDHOLDERS: AUSTIN, Texas (BP) — Bondholders for Great Hills Church in Austin, Texas, will get about half what they are owed, according to a plan worked out by the church and the bondholders, the (Austin) *American-Statesman* newspaper reported. The details were worked out in late March, during a 16-hour meeting between the church's finance committee, a committee representing bondholders, attorneys, and a court-appointed mediator, Great Hills pastor Harold O'Chester reported in his church newsletter. Great Hills filed for bankruptcy protection in early January to avoid foreclosure on its property. That step came eight years after the church fell behind on its payments. The original financial crisis was triggered when a deal to sell its former property unraveled and the church had to seek high-interest financing during turbulent times in the real-estate market. The new agreement calls for Great Hills to pay \$7 million of its almost-\$15 million debt by March 31, 1998, the newspaper reported. The church is to start making monthly payments, at 9% interest, May 1. It is to make a down payment of \$200,000 as soon as the plan is approved by bankruptcy court and the church's 1,200 bondholders. It then will pay \$1.3 million at the end of the year and the balance by the 1998 deadline. "We are nearing closure to something we have faced for 10 years and could do nothing about," O'Chester said. "The bondholders' committee basically got everything they asked for. They were happy with the result, and we certainly were also."

ASSISTED SUICIDE RULINGS OPEN WAY TO EUTHANASIA: WASHINGTON (BP) — The latest federal appeals court ruling striking down a law against physician-assisted suicide, coupled with a similar opinion less than a month earlier, opens "wider the door which leads to active euthanasia," a Southern Baptist ethicist warned. A three-judge panel of the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals struck down April 2 a New York law prohibiting physician assistance in a suicide. In his opinion, Judge Roger Miner said there was no difference between the prescribing of drugs for a suicide than the withdrawal of artificial life support. Burke Balch, director of the National Right to Life Committee's Department of Medical Ethics, said in a prepared statement the decision "threatens people — like those with Alzheimer's disease and other conditions that fog their mental abilities — with death, even though they never asked for it and may not wish it. Thus, the so-called 'right to die' will quickly become the duty to die."

ANDY STANLEY'S CHURCH NOT SOUTHERN BAPTIST, FOR NOW: ATLANTA (BP) — Andy Stanley, son of former Southern Baptist Convention President Charles Stanley, said the church he is helping start in north Atlanta will not be Southern Baptist, for now. The new church, North Point Community Church, has yet to accept members, purchase land, or meet weekly. About 1,600 people attend Sunday evening worship services held twice a month. Worshipers currently meet in a conference center in the neighboring county to where leaders hope to build. Stanley said the decision was a difficult one, based on the church's vision and mission. The decision is not a criticism of the Southern Baptist Convention, he said, adding two-thirds of the leadership come from Southern Baptist backgrounds. "I'm very grateful for the convention, and we will support financially Southern Baptist causes," Stanley, 38, was on staff at First Church of Atlanta for 10 years. A graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, Stanley preached three years at the church's northern campus. He left the church in August 1995, disagreeing with his father's continued leadership at the church while wife Anna pursued a divorce. Anna Stanley has since withdrawn her petition for divorce. The younger Stanley said First Church, Atlanta, was criticized because members don't use Southern Baptist literature, don't send students to Southern Baptist seminaries, and "don't support the Cooperative Program that much. I felt like we would sort of fall into that same category," he said.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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VRS DKWR ZGA VRS BQQD PSSV VQYSVRSD: VRS
UQDA KT VRS PZESD QN VRSP ZUU.

BDQHSDOT VLSGVC-VLQ: VLQ

This week's clue: P equals M.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Nehemiah Eight: Eight.

Soccer team's forfeit gives Clinton men chance to "Shine" in Costa Rica

A group of Mississippi College (MC) students participated in a two-week long Cornerstone Choir tour to Costa Rica during their Christmas break as representatives of the school and First Church, Clinton.

While there, a soccer tournament was being held, for which one team did not show up "So they asked us to play," said choir member Rusty Bryant. "There were only about five of us who had actually played soccer before and we did not think we had a chance. We then did the best we could and came out on top."

As a result of that first invitation, the group was asked to return to Costa Rica with a men's soccer team to participate in a May sports evangelism effort.

The soccer team — comprised of 19 former and current MC students — will travel to Costa Rica May 19-26 to play daily soccer matches across the country, one match against a Costa Rican first division professional team.

The men have chosen to name their team Brilla, which means "shine" in Spanish.

Mississippian Russell Kyzar, missionary to Costa Rica, wrote of the effort: "Costa Ricans love soccer. It is probably their absolute favorite pastime. Men, especially, live and breathe it. I am so excited about the possibility that you can... play and do



A group of Clinton men made up of Mississippi College students and graduates will participate in a sports evangelism effort in May. The team, called "Brilla" (Spanish, for "shine") will compete with Costa Rican soccer teams, conduct soccer clinics, pass out tracts, share personal testimonies, and sing in local churches for a full week.

evangelism at the same time."

Brilla team members will have the opportunity to share personal testimonies during half-time of each game, lead soccer clinics each afternoon at local schools, and sing in local churches each evening.

Costa Rican Christians will house the team and provide some meals during their stay. The team

hopes to raise \$15,000 for transportation and other expenses, including team uniforms and printing some 4,000 tracts.

The Clinton Civitan organization has taken on the sponsorship of the team so that any contributions they accept will be tax-deductible.

Members of the team are: Jay Albritton, associate pastor of Wynndale Church, Terry; Bill Bacon, minister of music at First Church, Clinton; Jason Boutwell, youth intern at First Church, Clinton; MC student; Rusty Bryant, youth intern/activities assistant at First Church, Clinton; Jason Cox, minister of youth and music at Bethesda Church; Jeremy Cox, activities assistant at First Church, Clinton; Harvey Ellis, student minister at First Church, Clinton; Dean Farrar, student at Belhaven College, Jackson; Jamey Wells, minister of recreation at First Church, Brandon; MC students David Gibbs, Matt Brown, Walker Gibson, Bill Farmer, Brian Hudson, Barry Lagg, Scotty Rogers; MC graduates Steven Patterson and Matt Thomas; and Merle Ziegler, MC soccer coach/professor.



LifeAnswers

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I sometimes think my husband, an excellent Christian father, is overbearing in disciplining our toddler. How can I approach him about this?

I looked up the definition of "overbearing" and found the following words: overwhelming, dominating, and haughty. Such characteristics in a parent can frustrate a child and cause him to give up or rebel — depending on the child. Your husband may not be aware that he is coming across like this to your toddler. Study your husband's manner in disciplining your toddler and let him know what you have observed. Talk with your husband about the things that "push his button" and cause him to respond in an overbearing way. Encourage your husband to rephrase his pronouncements in a quieter tone, and develop a signal between the two of you that will let him know he is going too far. Opening up such lines of communication will strengthen both your family and your marriage. This will be a wonderful gift to your children when they begin to model their parents'

behavior with their own children.

I am adamant that my children will not be paddled by teachers, but I want them to respect their teachers' authority. How can I accomplish this?

What you say in front of your children about their teachers and how you show respect for them will determine whether your children respect their authority. When parents demonstrate respect for authority, children often do the same, even when absent from their parents. We may disagree with teachers, elected officials — even church leaders — but we need to respect their positions. Save personal comments for private times with your spouse or other adults. When your children say disrespectful things about their teachers, kindly correct them and ask that they think of another way to disagree without showing disrespect. Finally, demand that your children respect you. When you do not allow them to speak ugly to you or chide you, the message they receive from you is, "I respect myself and I want you to respect yourself as well."

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Baptist Record

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April 25, 1996